

# **COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, March 20, 2014 (10 am – 12 noon)**

- I. Welcome**  
**Kimberly Wasserman – Chairman**
- II. Introductions**
  - A. Springfield Videoconference**
    - Tamika Gibson, IEC
    - Alec Messina, IERG
    - Ken Page, IEPA
    - Debbie Daugherty, IEPA
  - B. Chicago Videoconference**
    - Kim Wasserman, LVEJO
    - Dan Salamone– DCEO intern
    - Sharonda Williams, IEPA
    - Keith Harley – Chicago Legal Clinic
  - C. Teleconference**
    - Joe Mitchell, IDPH
    - Doris Turner, IDPH
    - Gloria Williams, IDNR
    - Dr. Sylvia Hood-Washington
    - Cheryl Johnson - PCR
    - Christian Strachan, PCR
    - Jerry Mead-Lucero, PERRO
    - Chris Pressnall, IEPA
- III. Approval of Agenda (electronic copy)**  
Motion- Kim Wasserman  
Second- Joe Mitchell  
Motion Carried
- IV. Approval of the Minutes (electronic copy)**
  - 1. November 19, 2014 minutes**  
Motion- Gloria Williams  
Second- Jerry Mead-Lucero  
Motion Carried

## **V. Presentations/Discussions:**

### **1. Agency Involvement/Oversight Sub-Committee**

- **Overview of meetings and action items**
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Environmental Justice Questionnaires were created and the all of the state agencies on the Commission completed them. We are at the point to provide feedback. The reality is the agency oversight sub-committee only has two non-agency members. Because of this there was a suggestion to share the answers with all of the Commissioners and get feedback. The goal is to receive substantive feedback from the non-State agency Commissioners. This process will be achieved with two conference calls. Once the feedback has been gathered the state agencies will receive those responses in writing. I also had a thought to extend a third conference call to engage environmental justice organizations outside of the Commission. We could lean on their experiences with state agencies and get their feedback.
- Mead-Lucero, LVEJO- Are these calls to review the environmental justice questionnaires submitted by agencies?
- Messina, IERG- Have you identified groups? Are these calls for other participants or just EJ commission?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I have identified specific groups. But I am also opening it up to other stakeholders that we may not know. We can find a way to provide notice for people to attend these meetings.
- Messina, IERG- I am not really in a position to make a decision. Maybe other agencies don't need to report back.
- Mitchell, IDPH- What are we going to do with this information? Overall what direction should we be going in regard to environmental justice? We are open to recommendations.
- Harley- We have been using a model based on the federal level. The idea is to use this as a basis of what we can do in Illinois. The more inclusive we can be as far as feedback from other organizations the better.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Ken can we work together to have two calls around the environmental justice questionnaires and create a strategy for the third call?
- Page, IEPA- Yes.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- We want to get feedback from non-agency folks and get something in writing so that we can move forward.
- Page, IEPA- Commissioners can go to the EJ Commission webpage to see all approved minutes and the environmental justice questionnaires.
- **Meetings and minutes**  
(12/10/2013; 1/8/2014; 2/26/2014 and 3/12/2014; All minutes are located on the EJ Commission's webpage)
- **Sub-Committee Chairman**

- **EJ Questionnaire**
  - a. **Illinois Environmental Protection Agency**
  - b. **Illinois Department of Public health**
  - c. **Illinois Department on Aging**
  - d. **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity**
  - e. **Illinois Department of Natural Resources**

## **2. Brownfields Redevelopment Sub-Committee**

### **A. Overview of meetings and action items**

- Wasserman, LVEJO- I didn't get to speak with the Brownfields co-chairs (Dr. Sylvia Washington/Cheryl Johnson) before this meeting today on how to cover reporting so I will be presenting the update from that sub-committee. We met on four occasions and received some great information. IEPA gave us an informative presentation about their Brownfields and SRP programs. We spoke about Brownfields education and whether there is a place that people could go to find out about brownfields. I charged Ken and IEPA to let us know what currently exists. There is a push to see what is happening on a national level and how we can pull in this information. Though IEPA's presentation was informative it was a lot to digest. We will provide suggestions about breaking down that information. In regard to the education web portal I would like Christian Strachan from PCR to discuss with you some information he provided to me about an existing web portal that may be useful to us.
- Strachan, PCR- U.S. EPA has been working with community groups around community cumulative assessment. Residents can report on illegal dumping, odors and other environmental harms in their communities. This program has been going on for eight months; it is still in its beta stage. The funding has ended for this program but the web portal still exists. It was suggested that this might be a good portal to start from.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I am excited to think about the potential here. When we are discussing the education web portal we can discuss community redevelopment.
- Hood-Washington- Did Commissioners receive information about this web portal? Did we receive the link to the American Planning Association information provided by Commissioner Kyle?
- Mead-Lucero, PERRO- We also spoke about IL EPA's mapping tool. Obviously this mapping tool doesn't include all categories of Brownfields. We also need to define Brownfields.
- Messina, IERG- This includes RCRA sites.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Can we pull all of these sites into one place? I invite all Commissioners to join these calls if you have an interest in this area. This web portal is very exciting.

- Page, IEPA- DCEO has a tool out there that shows you a list of commercial properties that are available in the State of Illinois.
- Hood-Washington- Please let the co-chairs know how we can work with you.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I will improve this for the next call.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- In regard to community led redevelopment we want to get some feedback to IEPA about the presentation they gave us. Communities need to understand these processes. How do we break down this information and make it accessible. Keith Harley volunteered to help me with this task. We will get feedback in writing to share with the Brownfields subcommittee and then IEPA.
- Messina, IERG- What kinds of feedback will be provided?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- We will bring back questions and get clarification. Provide suggestions in some spaces. When I ask folks about these programs they don't understand how it works. The language needs to be broken down.
- Messina, IERG- If other Commissioners have feedback and questions can we send them to you?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Yes.
- Messina, IERG- At the next subcommittee meeting would you anticipate getting additional feedback from other groups?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- We want to provide feedback in regard to the presentations because people don't know about these programs and if they do they don't understand the technical language.
- Hood-Washington- Are you speaking to environmental justice groups only in Illinois or outside of the state?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Since this is an Illinois Commission I am only speaking with groups in Illinois.
- Hood-Washington- Having conversations with whom?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I have had conversation with folks as far as Southern Illinois. Part of my job as chair is to report back to groups in Illinois about this Commission. I have asked these groups for feedback on IL EPA's Brownfields program.
- Mead-Lucero, PERRO- The broader picture was to figure out how to make Brownfield Redevelopment not just private and if there was a need for increased funding. Now we are speaking about IEPA's discussion with the Brownfields subcommittee and providing feedback.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I am recommending myself and Commissioner Harley to provide feedback around the IEPA Brownfields programs. We will be sending out links to folks and on the next call we will dive into Community Redevelopment more.
- Messina, IERG- Are there thoughts to open up the Community Redevelopment conversation to other folks? We will go off of what you and Keith provide the Commission.

- Page, IEPA- This is a good opportunity for Commissioners to look at these programs and see what they can do with the parameters. He will provide information regarding the above.
- Williams, IDNR-What is SRP?
- Page, IEPA- SRP is the Site Remediation Program. It is a voluntary clean-up program driven by property transactions to achieve a No Further Remediation (NFR) letter from IEPA.
- Page, IEPA- I will provide web links again for these programs.

#### **B. Meetings and minutes**

**(12/11/2013; 1/8/2014; 2/26/2014 and 3/12/2014; All minutes are located on the EJ Commission's webpage)**

#### **C. Sub-Committee Co-Chairs**

### **VI. Old Business**

- Page, IEPA- We need to look at Opens Meeting Act (OMA) re-certifications (everyone needs to renew their OMA certification online).
- Messina, IERG- Do we have to take ethic trainings in the spring?
- Page, IEPA- Will check with Chief Legal Counsel for IEPA to see if this is required by the members on the EJ commission.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Only OMA.
- Mead-Lucero, PERRO- Are terms expiring? They were created three years ago. Applications were submitted in that first year. Would terms start from the first time that we met as a Commission?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Term appointments were staggered. If your term has expired, you need to reapply to the commission. The terms start when you were appointed. If you go to the EJ Commission webpage it has terms and I would recommend that you speak with Ken about when your term is up.
- Williams, IDNR- I think we do have to get ethics training.

### **VII. Open Discussion/Questions**

- Johnson, PCR- I discovered Bill SB3056 (MWRD). I am concerned that MWRD is going to implement this at their Calumet facility and it would impact my community, Altgeld Gardens. It is an amendment to the Water Reclamation Act. This bill will have an impact on community waste streams. This bill is in its third reading. How can we get an amendment? Secondly as a Commission any industrial proposal should come to the Commission. What about open sludge beds? What is the Commission's position on this?
- Wasserman, LVEJO- Did homework on this bill and some folks like the Illinois Environmental Council didn't know the proposal for NWRD was in Altged Gardens. How do we inform people of these proposals happening in their communities? Please check in with Jen

Walling. She does have an interest in speaking with you about open air drying. In regard to the Commission how do we inform impacted communities? We should figure this out more concretely. The web portal may be a part of the solution.

- Johnson, PCR- From a community standpoint this is an environmental justice issue. I would feel uncomfortable sitting on a Commission that has no influence on these issues.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- How are we judiciously getting this information out to people?
- Gibson, IEC- Best thing to do is speak with Jen.
- Mead-Lucero, PERRO- What Cheryl is saying is valid. Since we have this Commission we should know about legislation coming forward that impacts environmental justice communities.
- Strachan, PCR- They are in bringing additional waste and food waste. These are the types of bills that the Commission should get action on. IL EPA has an amendment on the bill. IL EPA has direct influence on this bill.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- We need to work more with IEC on finding out about bills that impact environmental justice communities. Commissioner need to have this information about their communities. We must continue on this point and work on this as a Commission.
- Page, IEPA- Is there a way to look into this information and how can it be disseminated?
- Gibson, IEC- People can utilize the bill tracker on IEC's website.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- I will ask that people on this Commission do their due diligence. One of your responsibilities is to reach out to communities with relevant information.
- Harley- I reviewed this notice for a stakeholder meeting that James Jennings from IL EPA sent out regarding the Community Right-To-Know law being amended. It is being amended to include issues around exposed pathways and vapor intrusion. This has to do with Brownfields, LUST, RCRA etc. It would be great to put this notice on the EJ Commission website.
- Johnson, PCR- Would this deal with WRD?
- Harley- I don't think it will.
- Page, IEPA- Illinois EPA plans to propose amendments to the Right-To-Know rules. The proposed amendments primarily relate to the addition of notices required for threats of exposure from (1) offsite soil gas contamination via the inhalation exposure routes and (2) offsite groundwater contamination via the indoor inhalation exposure route.
- Wasserman, LVEJO- This is good information to share. If folks could share this with other communities that would be great.

### **VIII. Next meeting date and location**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2014**

Wed, June 18th @ 10:00 a.m. in Aurora, hosted by Dr, Sylvia Washington.

Wed, May 14<sup>th</sup> @ 10 a.m. Agency Sub-committee call.

Wed, May 14th @ 12 p.m. Brownfields Sub-committee call.

### **IX. Adjournment**

11:19 a.m.